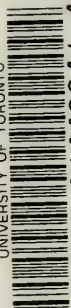


UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



3 1761 01449841 4

Berry, Jack
The pronunciation
of Ga

PL
8191
B4



PRONUNCIATION OF

GA

by J. Berry, B.A.

Lecturer in West African Languages, University of London

EFFER - CAMBRIDGE

Three Shillings & Sixpence net

PL
8191
.2
B4

Gramophone records giving examples from this text have been published by the Linguaphone Institute, and full particulars can be obtained from them at Linguaphone House, 207-209, Regent Street, London, W.1.



1076912

The Pronunciation of GA

BY

J. BERRY, B.A.

(Lecturer in West African Languages, University of London)

**Illustrated by two gramophone records made by
T. Q. Botchway**

This is the second in a series of short pamphlets on the more important languages of the Gold Coast. These languages have common difficulties for the English learner. The main are:—

(i) The tones: Ga is a tone language (see p. 12).

(ii) Certain exotic sounds not found in European languages. Traditional grammars offer little help and the beginner is apt to be discouraged from the outset. In this series the particular needs of the student in the early stages are kept in mind. The text describes briefly the various speech sounds of which the language is composed and the modes of producing them; the accompanying gramophone records provide examples and material for the student to use in putting into practice what he has learnt. Having worked through the following pages, he should be well on the way to acquiring an adequate pronunciation of Ga and could begin with an informant or teacher the study of a grammar such as Mrs. M. B. Wilkie's *Ga Grammar, Notes and Exercises*.¹

The orthography of Ga, as recommended by the Ga Society,² is in almost every respect a "phonetic" one, and the letters used here are those of the present spelling. The system of tone marking is that used by Professor Ida C. Ward in her *Pronunciation of Twi*, pamphlet I in this series.

¹ Oxford University Press, 1930.

² *Ga Word-List with Rules of Spelling*, Accra, 1946.

The Gramophone Records.

The material of the records is:—

- Record I (Part 1) Vowels, difficult consonants, the semi-vowel *w̃*.
 „ I („ 2) Long vowels, successions of vowels, tones.
 „ II („ 1) Sentences, greetings.
 „ II („ 2) Conversation.

Groups of examples spoken on the records are marked by a star (★) in the margin of the text. The complete text of Record I will be found in the Appendix.

The words are recorded leaving time for the repetition of each word. It is useful to listen for some time before beginning to imitate. After this, the student should repeat many times until the exact pronunciation of the sounds can be reproduced without difficulty. It is useful to reverse the order, i.e. the student to read each word from the text before playing the record. Finally, let him practise saying the words without the record. This is a help towards developing a memory for the sounds and tones of the language as well as a means of building up a vocabulary.

Note.—No two persons pronounce exactly alike. It should be remembered that there is a considerable diversity of pronunciation and usage amongst present-day speakers of Ga, particularly in Accra. This study is based upon the speech of Mr. T. Q. Botchway. The examples in the text were taken from his speech and the recordings were made by him.

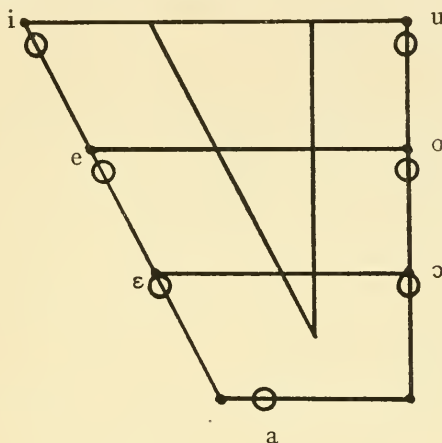
I. The Vowels.

The Ga vowels are not difficult. The most common fault with English learners is a tendency to diphthongize what are in Ga pure vowels, particularly when the latter are long. For example, in pronouncing *i* and *u*, a glide is heard as the tongue moves from a low position to a closer one. Similarly, *e* and *o* are often replaced by *ej* and *ow*. This may be avoided if care is taken not to move the tongue and lips during the production of vowel sounds.

Ga has seven significant vowels: they are represented by the letters:

i, e, ε, a, ɔ, o, u.

The cardinal vowel chart below gives their tongue positions.¹ Their lip positions in each case are normal for the type of vowel, viz. i has spread lips, e spread, but slightly more open, ε less spread, nearing neutral position, a neutrally open lips; ɔ has open rounding, o closer rounding and u very close rounding.



Cardinal vowels ●
Ga vowels (oral) ○

EXAMPLES.

i is near to Cardinal No. 1, a close vowel.

* bi [ˈ] child Kofi [ˌ] a name for boys sikle [ˈ] sugar
born on Friday

e is somewhat lower than Cardinal No. 2; it is near the first element of a typical English diphthong ej (as in *day*).

be [_] *time* hela [_ _] *sickness* amale [_ _] *lie*

This vowel occurs:

(i) As a prefix.

enumõ [ˈɛ̃mõ] *five* ekāa [ˈɛ̃kɑ̃] *bravery* emomo [ˈɛ̃mɔ̃] *old*

(ii) As the third person singular pronominal prefix.

etee [] *he has gone* eda [] *he is big* enine [] *his hand*

¹ For an explanation of cardinal vowels and other phonetic terms, see Westermann and Ward, *Practical Phonetics for Students of African Languages*.

ɛ is a little more open than the e of English *bed*—about Cardinal No. 3. It should offer no difficulty.

pɛ [ˈ] *just, exactly* kwɛ *to look at* lɛɛ [ˈˈ] *ship*

e and ɛ contrasted:

★	te [ˈ]	<i>how, what</i>	tɛ [ˈ]	<i>stone</i>
	ke [ˈ]	<i>woodpile</i>	kɛ [ˈ]	<i>if</i>
	he [ˈ]	<i>body</i>	hɛ [ˈ]	<i>waist</i>

a is front, fairly near to Cardinal No. 4, rather like the French a in *table*, further forward than the English a in *father* and more open than the English a in *man*. Those who find it difficult to imitate should try to isolate the first element in the English diphthong aj (as in *white*) which is quite near the Ga sound.

★ ga [ˈ]	<i>ring</i>	ta [ˈ]	<i>war</i>	dade [ˈˈ]	<i>iron</i>
----------	-------------	--------	------------	-----------	-------------

This vowel occurs as a prefix:

abɛ [ˈˈ]	<i>proverb</i>	adeka [ˈˈ]	<i>box</i>	adesa [ˈˈˈ]	<i>story</i>
----------	----------------	------------	------------	-------------	--------------

ɔ is near to Cardinal No. 6, not quite so open as the English vowel in *not*, nearer rather to that in *caught*.

wɔ [ˈ]	<i>to-morrow</i>	kɔ <i>to pick up</i>	gbɔ [ˈ]	<i>stranger</i>
--------	------------------	----------------------	---------	-----------------

o is a half close rounded vowel, a little lower than Cardinal No. 7. A similar vowel occurs as the first element of the English diphthong ow (as in *boat*). English speakers tend to substitute for the Ga o when short an English u as in *put*. The two sounds have a considerable resemblance, but the Ga is less fronted and requires more lip rounding than the English sound.

ekome [ˈˈˈ]	<i>one</i>	pamplo [ˈˈ/]	<i>bamboo</i>	gowa [ˈˈˈ]	<i>guava</i>
-------------	------------	--------------	---------------	------------	--------------

This vowel occurs:

(i) As a prefix.

oblɔyoo [ˈˈˈˈ]	¹ <i>maiden</i>	obonu [ˈˈˈ]	<i>talking drum</i>
		onufu [ˈˈˈ]	<i>snake</i>

(ii) As the second person singular pronominal prefix.

Onu lo? [ˈˈˈˈ]	<i>Do you understand?</i>	omama [ˈˈˈˈ]	<i>your cloth</i>
----------------	---------------------------	--------------	-------------------

¹ ˈˈˈ implies that the sound is syllabic (may have its own tone), see p. 12.

(iii) As the second person singular object pronoun in its shortened form.

Miŋa o [ˈˌ] *Good day to you* aatʃɛ o [ˌˌ] *You are called*

o and ɔ contrasted:

★ eto [ˌˌ]	<i>he kept it</i>	eto [ˌˌ]	<i>his bottle</i>
bo [ˌˌ]	<i>you</i>	bo [ˌˌ]	<i>dew</i>
efo [ˌˌ]	<i>he cut it</i>	efo [ˌˌ]	<i>it is wet</i>

u—a close rounded back vowel near to Cardinal No. 8.

★ bu [ˌˌ]	<i>hole</i>	fufɔ [ˌˌ]	<i>milk</i>	duku [ˌˌ]	<i>kerchief</i>
-----------	-------------	-----------	-------------	-----------	-----------------

II. Nasalization of Vowels.

All vowels except e and o have nasal counterparts, not differing unduly in quality.

ehĩ [ˌˌ]	<i>it is good</i>	gugɔ̃¹ [ˌˌ]	<i>nose</i>
etẽ [ˌˌ]	<i>three</i>	tũ [ˌˌ]	<i>gun</i>
kã [ˌˌ]	<i>dish</i>		

Oral vowels and nasal vowels contrasted:

★ ʃi	<i>to knock</i>	ʃĩ	<i>to leave</i>
kɛ [ˌˌ]	<i>if</i>	kẽ [ˌˌ]	<i>by all means!</i> <i>certainly</i>
ka	<i>to hammer</i>	kã	<i>to lie (e.g. on the ground)</i>
kɔ [ˌˌ]	<i>a door of plaited grasses</i>	kɔ̃¹	<i>to bite</i>
fu	<i>to moulder</i>	fũ¹	<i>a smell</i>

In the current orthography nasalization is marked only where misunderstanding might arise from its omission. The student must therefore observe nasalization for himself (mark ~ to distinguish in the early stages). It must be remembered that there are degrees of nasality. In the neighbourhood of nasal consonants vowels are normally nasalized: for example, the vowels in ŋma [ˌˌ],

¹ The student should guard against the common tendency of beginners to add the nasal consonant ŋ to the back vowels; there should be no contact of the tongue with any part of the roof of the mouth.

scent, and ɲaa [ː], *wisdom*, are slightly nasal owing to the proximity of ɲm and ɲ (compare the nasal "twang" of the English vowel *a* in *man*), but in ɲmã, *to write*, and ɲã [ː], *wife*, the nasalization is much stronger: in the first case the nasalization is, as it were, "dependent" (and therefore need not be noted), in the second, it is deliberate and is an essential feature of the word.

III. Vowel Length.

All vowels occur short and long. Vowel length is important. The following pairs of words illustrate the two quantities.

	Short Vowel		Long Vowel
★	pi [ː] <i>well</i>	pīi [ː] <i>many</i>	
	gbe <i>to kill</i>	gbee [ː] <i>voice</i>	
	ba <i>to come</i>	baa [ː] <i>leaf</i>	
	tɔ [ː] <i>bottle</i>	tɔɔ <i>to be replete</i>	
	ko [ː] <i>a, certain</i>	koo [ː] <i>forest</i>	
	bu [ː] <i>hole</i>	buu [ː] <i>mosquito net</i>	

The verbal noun is formed from certain verbs by lengthening the root vowel, e.g.

★	ba <i>to come</i>	baa [ː] <i>coming</i>
	ya <i>to go</i>	yaa [ː] <i>going</i>
	dzu <i>to steal</i>	dzuu [ː] <i>theft</i>
	le <i>to rear</i>	lee [ː] <i>rearing</i>

Note.—Ga actually makes use of several degrees of vowel length. Compare, for example, the relative lengths of vowel in the following words.

(1) (short)	ba [ː]	<i>come!</i>
(2) (half-long)	ebaakɔ [ː / ː]	<i>he will pick up</i>
(3) (long)	ebaa [ːː]	<i>he comes</i> (habitual)
	baa [ːː]	<i>leaf</i>
(4) (very long)	baa [ːːː]	<i>crocodile</i>

The lengths illustrated in (2) and (4), however, appear to depend on tonal movement and no examples have been found affecting meaning other than as tone.

IV. Succession of Vowels.

Nearly every possible combination of vowels in sequence is to be found in roots. A few are given below.

★	bie [ˈ-]	<i>here</i>	kao [ˈ-]	<i>sweet biscuit</i>
	abeo [ˌ-ˈ-]	<i>mishap</i>	kue [ˌ-]	<i>neck</i>
	Akua [ˌ-ˈ-]	<i>name for girls</i>	wuo [ˌ-]	<i>fishing</i>

The habitual tense of the verb is formed by the addition of a suffix to the root.

★	ebio	<i>he asks</i>	ebɛɔ	<i>he pinches</i>
	efɛɔ	<i>he does</i>	ekao	<i>he hammers</i>
	ehoo	<i>he cooks</i>	ewuo	<i>he bathes in the sea</i>

The tone is in all cases [ˌ-ˈ-].

Similarly, the plural of some nouns is formed by the addition of a suffix to the root.

★	toi [ˌ-]	<i>sheep</i>	bai [ˌ-]	<i>leaves</i>	fai [ˌ-]	<i>rivers</i>
---	----------	--------------	----------	---------------	----------	---------------

V. The Semi-Vowels.

y needs no comment.

w written w has two sounds:

- (i) The normal velar **w** (as in English) which occurs before all vowels except i.
- (ii) The palatal semi-vowel, i.e. with front of tongue raised to the hard palate as in French *hui*t. This occurs only before i, e and ɛ.

The student would be well advised in the early stages to mark for himself the palatal variety as an aid to memory. The usual method is (w̃).

<i>Velar</i>		<i>Palatal</i>	
we [ˌ-]	<i>house</i>	★ w̃i	<i>to avoid</i>
wɛ	<i>to come to a stop</i>	w̃ere	<i>to sit by the fire</i>
wa	<i>to be hard</i>	w̃ɛ	<i>to cohabit</i>
wɔ	<i>to sleep</i>		
wo [ˌ-]	<i>honey</i>		
wu [ˌ-]	<i>husband</i>		

VI. The Consonants.

With the exception of the sounds with double articulation (see below), consonants in Ga should offer little difficulty. The plosives *p, b; t, d; k, g*, for example, are very much as in English.

p, t, k are aspirated. *b, d, g* are fully voiced.

Note.—There is a tendency amongst some Gas to articulate *t* as a dental, i.e. with a flat and spread tongue well forward on the alveolar touching the upper teeth. With the same speakers *d* is somewhat retracted from this position, i.e. a normal alveolar as in English.

pii [_]	<i>much, many</i>	pāpām [_ _ ^]	<i>towel</i>
bi [^]	<i>child</i>	abifao [_ _ ^ ^]	<i>baby in arms</i>
toi [_ ^]	<i>car</i>	tɔ̃ŋtɔ̃ŋ [_ ^ ^]	<i>mosquito</i>
da	<i>to be big</i>	duade [_ _ ^]	<i>cassava</i>
kɔi [^ -]	<i>hoe</i>	kokoo [_ \]	<i>cocoa</i>
ga [_]	<i>ring</i>	gɔ̃ŋ [_]	<i>hill</i>

tʃ and *dz* are prepalatal affricates, i.e. they are articulated against the fore-part of the hard palate (the tip of the tongue being down). They resemble the English sounds in *chapter* and *Jack*. Before front vowels it is a good idea for the beginner to articulate with the lips well spread¹; this serves to distinguish *tʃ* from *tʃw* and *dz* from *dzw*. The latter pair have strong lip rounding (see below). *tʃ* is aspirated, *dz* has little friction.

★ tʃɛ [_]	<i>father</i>	tʃofã [_ _]	<i>medicine</i>	tʃui [_ ^]	<i>heart</i>
dzeŋ [_]	<i>world</i>	Dzu [^]	<i>Monday</i>	dzata [_ ^]	<i>lion</i>

m, n need no description (see, however, p. 12 for examples of syllabic *m* and *n*).

ny is a palatal nasal and is one sound, cf. *gn* in the French *montagne*. (English speakers tend to substitute the sound in *new* which is *n* plus *y*.)

★ nyẽ [_]	<i>mother</i>	nyõmõ [_ _]	<i>debt</i>	enyo [^ -]	<i>two</i>
-------------	---------------	---------------	-------------	--------------	------------

*ŋ*¹ is a velar nasal, the sound in English *king*. Unlike English, Ga frequently begins words with this sound. If the student

¹ The English affricates may have some lip-rounding.

★ ႏၣ် *to be sweet*
 ablonjo [__ -] *palm oil cake*
 ablonywa [__ -]

sann [ˈsɐ̃] *very* dzogbann [ˈd͡zɔɡbɐ̃] *well*

★ mla [_] law ɲmlɛ [_] bell
kplotoo [_ /] pig gblā [_] marriage

¹ Written **ŋ** has several realisations in modern Ga speech. See p. 16 on assimilation of consonants.

r varies between speakers. The commoner types are:

- (i) Between vowels—a voiced alveolar fricative similar to the English sound.

★ here *to save* dzurõ [__] *to be right, good*
 to catch fire dzra [] *market*

- (ii) After alveolar and palatal consonants, a voiced fricative ((i) above) or a rolled lingual consonant of two to three taps. The second variety is usually syllabic and bears its own tone. Cf. **trɔ** [ɹ̥], *threepence*, where **tr** is articulated on the teeth.

* tʃwɾɛbo [__] flint

- (iii) After **m** occasionally a flapped **r** (the sides of the tongue touch the upper teeth. Cf. flapped **l** above).

* mrã [̃] *quickly*

- (iv) After all other consonants **r** is usually the rolled lingual described in (ii) above.

Note.—**r** and **l** are found as variants in the same word.

- (a) klāņ or krāņ [-], *wolf*,
klomōbi or kromōbi [ˈ-ˈ-], *first born*,

where *r* is a fricative.

- (b) hlono or hrono or rono [_ _], blister,
hlihlii or hrii or riirii [/ /],

where hl represents a velar fricative plus a weak l, and r is strongly rolled with or without preaspiration. Very few words of this type are to be found in the language.

f, v; s, z; h¹ call for no comment.

ʃ is a prepalatal fricative, the sound represented in English by the letters *sh*. Cf. tʃ described above.

★ aʃinao [__] *beads* ʃuo [__] *elephant*
 ʃitɔ [__] *pepper* ʃɔ̃tɔ̃ *to strangle*

¹ h before l is realised by some speakers as a velar fricative, the sound in Scottish *loch*, see note on r and l.

Sounds with more than one articulation.

These are the difficult sounds for the beginner. They are:

(i) The labiovelars.

(ii) The labialized counterparts of *ʃ*, *tʃ* and *dz*.

kp, gb, ŋm. In articulating these consonants two stops are made simultaneously; the back of the tongue touches the soft palate as for *k*, *g* or *ŋ* and the lips are touching for the *p*, *b* or *m* stop. They are most difficult to hear and to imitate in initial position. The student might best begin his practice in words such as:

akpaki [_ ʔ] *calabash*

where the on-glide from the vowel makes it easier to hear the *k*. In repeating, care must be taken that the two articulations really are simultaneous. The on-glide to the *k* must not be heard before the lips come together for the *p* position, i.e. it must be *a-kpaki* not *ak-paki*. In the same way, the two stops must be released together.

★	kpai ¹ [_ ʔ]	<i>cheeks</i>	kpakpo [_ ʔ]	<i>billy goat</i>
	gbɛ [_]	<i>road</i>	kpata [_ ʔ]	<i>kitchen</i>
	akpaki [_ ʔ]	<i>calabash</i>	gbogbo [_]	<i>wall</i>
	gbekɛ [ʔ -]	<i>child</i>	agba [_]	<i>bivouac</i>

ŋm is the nasal counterpart of **gb**. Cf. English *bri-ngme*.

★	ŋme [ʔ]	<i>palm nut</i>	ŋmɔ̃ [ʔ]	<i>farm</i>
	ŋmei [_]	<i>thorn</i>	ɛŋmɔ̃mi [ʔ -]	<i>ocru</i>

ʃw, tʃw, dzw are labialized *ʃ*, *tʃ* and *dz*,² i.e. the sounds are articulated with the lips rounded and protruded. In the case of

¹ **kp** is inaspirate and the release is often more in the nature of a *b* than a *p*. **gb** has a firmer lip pressure.

² Those who know Twi might compare the Ga sounds with **tw** and **dw** in that language. The main differences are:

- (i) the type of lip-rounding used;
- (ii) the degree of palatalization: in making the Twi **tw** the tongue is more arched and nearer the hard palate; there is also a pronounced (-w̃) glide which is absent in the Ga sound.

f and tf there is strong friction not only between tongue and palate but between the edge of the top teeth and the inside of the bottom lip (cf. the position for f): dzw has little friction. tfw and dzw occur before front vowels only.

Labialized and non-labialized consonants contrasted.

★	tfa	to dig	tfwa	to strike
	dza	to divide	dzwa	to break
	dzei [ʔ-]	there	dzwei [ʔ-]	rubbish
	fɛ	to reach	fwe	to remain
	fane	to slip	fwane	afternoon

Note.—These sounds are written as polygraphs, but it should be remembered that a *single* sound is represented, not a sequence of sounds ending with w.

VII. Tone.

Ga is a tone language, i.e. every syllable in the language has as an integral part of its formation, a musical pitch¹ or tone. The tone is usually carried by the vowel in the syllable, but in Ga, m, n, ŋ, l and r are sonants and may have their own tone.² It is necessary to distinguish:

(i) Syllables of *low* tone (these are most easily recognised).

★ wu [ː] husband fine [ːː] wing gbobilɔ [ːːː] hunter

(ii) Syllables pronounced on a pitch higher than low. These may be:

¹ The pitch is relative, not absolute. A child, for example, will give a pitch to his syllables, whether high or low, the physical frequency of which is much greater than the pitches of syllables spoken by an adult. Moreover, the actual *difference* in pitch between low and high tones is not of any great importance. What does matter, however, is that some difference in pitch shall be maintained between high- and low-toned syllables.

² As in mfoa [ːːː], pimple; nsɔdo [ːːː]; ŋta [ːː], twin; ŋkatɛ [ːːːː] groundnut; trɔ [ːː], threepence; blɛ [ːːː], then (cf. blɛ [ːː], pipe).

The following words each contain syllables of low and high or mid tone. They are given for practice in recognising tonal patterns. They illustrate the more common types of interval found in Ga.

★ dzei [̣̌-] *there* nuntʃo [̣̌-] *master* bie [̣̌-] *here*

In addition to the level pitches described above there are found syllables with a pitch movement up or down.

gbekẽ lɛ ekplɛ tʃu lɛŋ bɔtɛmɔ [ʔ-ʔ-ʔ-ʔ-ʔ-ʔ] *the child did not wish to enter the room*

(i) Rising tone, rises from low to mid or high, the distinction is unimportant (cf. low-high).

★ gbee [↗] *dog* looflɔ̃ [↗_] *bird* aboloo [ˉ↗] *bread*

(ii) Falling tone, is of two types: (a) falling to mid, (b) falling to low (cf. high-mid and high-low).

★ (a) nɛɛ [ˉ\] *this* nii [ˉ\] *things*

yibii [ˉ_ \] *fruit*

(b) kaaloo [ˉ\↗] *lime* nɛɛgbɛ [ˉ_ \] *where*

elaa¹ [ˉ_ \] *he sings*

(iii) Combinations of (i) and (ii).

Rising-falling ((i) plus (iia)).

★ kaa [↗↘] *crab* baa [↗↘] *crocodile*

Rising-falling ((i) plus (iib)). The rise is to mid.

★ kɛɛ [↗↘] *to say* hoo [↗↘] *to cook*

fee [↗↘] *to do*

The importance of tonal accuracy in speaking Ga even in the earliest stages cannot be over-emphasised. The following are but a few of the many pairs of words in Ga distinguished by tone alone.

la [ˉˉ]	blood	[ˉ_]	fire
fū [ˉ_]	to smell	[ˉˉ]	to swell up
wɔ̃dzi [ˉˉˉ]	eggs	[ˉˉˉ]	fetishes
awale [ˉˉˉˉ]	the game	[ˉˉˉˉ]	a spoon

It is always wise to learn tone and word together as the vocabulary is built up and it must be remembered that a word may have more than one tone pattern, i.e. the tone of a word heard in isolation will not always be the tone that that word has in connected speech. Particularly is this true of the verb with its complicated tonal paradigm and its several tonal

¹ Not to be confused with the negative of verbs which is:

★ eláa [ˉˉˉ], *he does not sing*;

compare also:

★ mitāa [ˉˉ\], *I tell stories*, and mitāa [ˉˉˉ], *I do not tell stories*.

conjugations. A detailed analysis of tonal behaviour in Ga would require more space than this short study allows. All that is possible is to give a few examples of the many types of tone change that may be expected; see below.

In addition to the conversation, a few short sentences are given on Record II for the student to practise hearing and repeating tones. As a start, it is always well to learn the tone patterns of common groups of words, particularly of greetings and everyday questions and answers.

VIII. Sounds in Connected Speech.

When the student comes to study connected speech he will find many changes in the pronunciation of words which he has learnt only in isolation, as it were. These changes may be described under the four headings of Tone Change, Similitude, Vowel Elision and Consonant Weakening.

Modern speakers of Ga, even in careful speech tend increasingly to elide sounds and even syllables. This can make the language difficult to follow and the student would be well advised from the beginning to think in terms of word groups rather than words and above all, to pay attention to what is said rather than what the books would have us say.

TONE CHANGE.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ★ A. tʃɛkwě [_ -], <i>uncle</i>
tedzi [- -], <i>ass</i> | but mitʃɛkwě [- - -], <i>my uncle</i>
but Ama tedzi [- - - -], <i>Ama's ass</i> |
| ★ B. baa [_], <i>leaf</i>
adeka [_ -], <i>box</i> | but baa lɛ [/ -], <i>the leaf</i>
but adeka lɛ [_ - -], <i>the box</i> |
| ★ C. kpoŋ [- -], <i>hook</i>
ɛbɔ̣ [_ - -], <i>he shouted</i> | but kpoŋ ko [- _ -], <i>a hook</i>
but ɛbɔ̣ amě [_ - - - -], <i>he shouted at them</i> |
| ★ D. mibahe [- - \], <i>I shall buy</i> | but mibahe kɔ̣mi [- - - - -], <i>I shall buy kenkey (corn bread)</i> |
| ★ mihoo [- ^], <i>I have done the cooking</i> | but mihoo ɔ̣ɔ̣ lɛ [- / / -], <i>I have cooked the beans</i> |

SIMILITUDE.

Note that in the present orthography written **ŋ** may have more than one realization in speech.

- (i) Before alveolar consonants it is the alveolar nasal.

ŋta [_ ^], *double*, is pronounced **nta**.

ŋsra [_ ^], *riddle*, is pronounced **nsra**.

- (ii) Before palatal consonants it is the palatal nasal.

maŋtʃe [_ _], *chief*, is pronounced **maŋtʃe**.

akaŋʃilo [_ ^ _ _], *competitor*, is pronounced **akaŋʃilo**.

The nasal is articulated with a very light palatal touch and frequently a close nasal vowel is substituted for the stop.

- (iii) Before labial and labiovelar consonants it is the labiovelar nasal.

ŋkpai [_ ^ -], *libation*, is pronounced **ŋmkpai**.

ŋɬpo [_ _], *shallows of a lagoon*, is pronounced **ŋmkp**.

VOWEL ELISION AND CONTRACTION.

ε is elided before **a**. The resulting vowel is lengthened.

ebe ataade [_ ^ _ / ^], *he has no clothes*, is pronounced **ebaataade**.

ε followed by **o** is contracted to (ɔ:).

ʃe ofɔ [^ ^ -], *throw it away!* is pronounced **ʃɔɔfɔ**.

a followed by **e** is contracted to (ɛ:).

eta edē [_ _ _], *he shook hands with him*, is pronounced **etɛɛdē**.

Note.—The tone is maintained.

WEAKENING AND DISAPPEARANCE OF CONSONANTS.

In quick speech there is a tendency:

- (i) For **h** to be weakened and drop out.

e'edzɔ ehe [_ _ ^ _ _], *he was surprised*, for **ehedzɔ ehe**.

- (ii) For a syllable with a liquid initial to be dropped. The preceding syllable is compensatorily lengthened.

wo(o)maa nɔ̃ [\ \ _], *lift up your cloth*, for wo omama
 ɛ nɔ̃.

- (iii) A syllable with a nasal initial to be contracted to ŋ (finally) or to a nasal homorganic with the following consonant.

eyɛŋ ɛɛŋ [_ _ ^ -], *it's true*, for eyɛ mli ɛɛɛŋ.

ɲfee [_ ^], *I did it*, for mifee [_ ^].

ŋmgbɛ rɔba ɛ ɔɔ? [^ _ ^ - _], *where is the rubber?* for nɛsgbɛ
 rɔba ɛ ɔɔ.

- (iv) Reduplicated syllables to be contracted.

Paa Dzoo [/ /], *Father Dzoo*, for Papa Dzo.

blodo [_ _], *bread*, for bodobodo.

omaa [_ \], *your cloth*, for omama.

The above are but a few examples of contraction and elision to be found in modern colloquial Ga. There are many others which the student must note for himself.

RECORD II

Side 1

Twenty Simple Sentences

Nɛsgbɛ odzɛ? [\ _ _ _]	Where are you coming from?
Midzɛ nitʃumɔ [_ _ ^ -]	I am coming from work.
Nɛsgbɛ oyaa? [\ _ _ _]	Where are you going?
Miiya ʃia [^ - - -]	I am going home.
Enyiɛ atʃwa? [^ \ _ _]	What time is it?
Atʃwa ɲmɛdzɪ enyɔ [^ _ _ _ ^]	It is two o'clock.
Tɛ atʃɔ o tɛŋ? [^ _ ^ _]	What is your name?
Atʃɔ mi Kwafi [_ ^ _ _]	I am called Kwasi.
Mɛni otao yɛ biɛ? [^ _ _ \ _ _ ^ -]	What do you want here?
Miitao bo fioo [^ \ _ ^ -]	Could you spare me a minute?
Osiklɛ ɛ enyiɛnyiɛ? [^ - _ ^ - - -]	How do you sell your sugar?
Edzwɛ kpāa [^ _ _]	Four for a farthing.

In the evening.

Miyawɔ [ˈˈ-]

I am going to sleep.

R. Yoo. Yaawɔ dzogbaŋ

[_/___] Sleep well.

Visiting.

Agoo [__] (before entering) R. Amɛe [__] Come in!

Oba kɛ omanyɛ [____ˈ]

Welcome.

Miyaba [ˈˈ-]

I go and will come again.

R. Yoo. Yaaba dzogbaŋ

[_/___]

Go and come in safety.

mibasra nye [ˈ__ˈˈ]

My visit is ended.

R. Yoo. Wɔŋda o ʃi. Yaaba

dzogbaŋ [____/___]

Thank you for coming.

Record II*Side 2***Conversation**

The following is the text of a short conversation written by Mr. E. A. W. Engmann, B.A., of Odumase, and recorded by Mr. T. Q. Botchway. The translation is somewhat free.

— / — — — \
 X. Ataa Kofi hã manye.
 Good morning Kofi.

— —
 — —
 Y. Manye ba.
 Good morning.

— \ — — — / — \ — — — — \
 X. Kwɛɛ nɛɛgbɛ oyaa leebi nɛɛ ni ohɛɛ edɔ nɛkɛ nɛɛ.
 I say! Where are you off to this morning and with such a serious face.

- Y. Hm. Ataa. Akɛɛ nitsumɔ egbee fi yɛ PWD no ni misaa mihe
Hm. They say there is plenty of work to be got at the PWD

miyakwɛ. akɛ aleenɔ mi hu aahe mi lo.
and so I am hurrying there to see if I can get a place.

- X. Lɛɛlɛŋ, bei nɛɛ amli lɛ nitsumɔ taomɔ edzra saŋŋ dientʃɛ, ni
Truly, these days it is difficult to find work and if you don't go

kɛ mɔ okɛfee ʃwɛmɔ lɛ, homɔ eye oŋamei kɛ obii.
about it seriously your wife and children will go hungry.

- Y. Anɔkwale. Blɛ kedze otʃii enumɔ ni minitsumɔ fite yɛ Nsawam
Too true. I lost my job at Nsawam five weeks ago and I am

nɛɛ lɛ, makeɛ o akɛ emli ewa ehã mi fioo. Kedzɛ miŋã
having a pretty rough time of it. My wife did her bit,

mɔdɛŋbɔɔ hewɔ ni, kulɛ ewa saŋŋ. Nto ole akɛ kɔmi ehoo.
otherwise things would have been grim. You know that

Aafeɛ otʃii etɛ kɛ fã nɛɛ lɛ, ɛʃɔ kenam efataa kɔmi lɛ he,
she sells boiled kenkey; well, for about the past three and a

ni nohewɔlɛ esãa ʃi kwraa. Aheɔ tamɔ noko.
half weeks she has been frying fish as well. It is so good,
it's sold out almost before it gets to the market. It
sells like anything.

- X. Asonokwa, Afuanye 'ε le o; onan eno yoo. Humi, bleoo,
Indeed. Afua-nye is a good wife. There are not many like

fi eetfu enii.

her. There is no fuss with her, she is quiet but she gets
on with the job.

Miŋa keε mi ake ehoo kōmi fii enyō dzenamo agbene.

My wife told me that she boils kenkey twice a day now.

- Y. Leεleŋ, maŋkē hima le, ekōmi ebe momo ni no nitfulbi ni yaa
It's true, she has her kenkey ready early in the morning so

Gbadafi ke nii le naa heo hīeo amēdē keyaa.

workmen going to Cantonments and such places can get it
to take along with them.

- X. Ei, Ataa Kofi, ni otŋi Nsawam tā neε ehā mikai sane ko.
Eh, Kofi, your mentioning Nsawam reminds me of something.

- Y. Meni sane?
What is it?

- X. Nyεεε Sohāa le mike onyemi Akuεε kpe ye Makola massi ni
Last Friday I met your cousin Akuεε near Makola market

miwa le ni wogba sane fioo. Dzee no ebaakeε mi ake, gbi
and I stopped him and we had a little chat. He told me

Dzu lɛ ni wɔgbɔ̃lɛ mli lɛ, Cadbury-bii lɛ batʃɛ lɛ koni egblɛ
that on that very day Cadburys had sent for him to go and

kokoo kɛdzɛ Nsawam kɛba Gā ehā amɛ. Ekɛɛ aahe kokoo
cart cocoa for them from Nsawam to Accra. He said cocoa

ko pɛ ni wa. ɔ̃mɛnɛɣmɛnɛ kɛ mɔ̃ oye kokoo-ɣmɔ̃ lɛ blɛ ɔ̃tɔ.
is selling like wildfire. Nowadays if you have a cocoa farm
you do all right.

- Y. PWD-bii lɛ miitao wɔ ɣmɛdzi nyɔ̃ɣma-kɛ-ekome hewɔlɛ
The PWD people want to see us at eleven so I'll leave

wɔbaagblɛ mli da.
you.

- X. Yaa ni oba.
Goodbye for now.

- Y. Yoo, wɔɔkpe ekɔ̃ɣ.
Right o! See you soon.

APPENDIX

Record I

Side 1

1. bi	2. kofi	3. sikle	4. te
5. tɛ	6. ke	7. kɛ	8. he
9. hɛ	10. ga	11. ta	12. dade
13. eto	14. etɔ	15. bo	16. bɔ
17. efo	18. efɔ	19. bu	20. fufɔ
21. duku	22. fi	23. fi	24. kɛ
25. kɛ̃	26. ka	27. kã	28. kɔ
29. kɔ̃	30. fu	31. fũ	

1. tʃɛ	2. tʃofã	3. tʃui
4. dzeŋ	5. Dzu	6. dzata
7. nyɛ̃	8. nyɔ̃mɔ̃	9. enyɔ̃
10. ŋɔɔ	11. ablogo	12. ablongwa
13. mla	14. ŋmlɛ	15. kplotoo
16. gblã		
17. trɔ	18. dzra	19. tʃwɛrɛbo
20. mra	21. here	22. dzurɔ̃
23. aʃinao	24. ʃɔ̃tɔ̃	25. kpai
26. kpakpo	27. akpaki	28. gbɛ
29. gbogbo	30. agba	31. ŋme
32. ŋmɔ̃	33. ɛŋmomi	34. tʃa
35. tʃwa	36. dza	37. dzwa
38. dzɛi	39. dzwɛi	40. ʃɛ
41. ʃwɛ̃	42. ʃane	43. ʃwane
44. w̃i	45. w̃ere	46. w̃ɛ̃

Record I

Side 2

1. pi	2. pii
3. gbe	4. gbee

THE PRONUNCIATION OF GA

5. ba	6. baa
7. tɔ	8. tɔɔ
9. ko	10. koo
11. bu	12. buu
13. biɛ	14. kao
15. abeo	16. kue
17. Akua	18. wuo
19. ebɔ	20. efeɔ
21. ebɛɔ	
22. ehɔɔ	23. ewuɔ
24. toi	25. bai
26. fai	

1. wu	2. fine	3. gbobilɔ
4. bi	5. tedzi	6. halamɔ
7. ʃia	8. tʃɔsemɔ	9. notomɔ
10. mfoa	11. ŋta	12. ŋkatie
13. tʃoku	14. kwakwe	15. ʃika
16. sisa	17. duku	18. biyoo
19. gbee	20. looflɔ	21. aboloo
22. nɛɛ	23. nii	24. yibii
25. nɛɛgbe	26. elaa	27. kaaloo
28. elaa	29. eláa	30. mitáa
31. mitáã	32. kaa	33. kɛɛ
34. hoo	35. madzu gbekɛbii lɛ ahe	
36. gbekɛ lɛ ekplee tʃu lɛŋ botemɔ		
37. tʃɛkwɛ	38. mitʃɛkwɛ	
39. tedzi	40. Ama tedzi	
41. baa	42. baa lɛ	
43. adeka	44. adeka lɛ	
45. kponɔ	46. kponɔ ko	
47. eblɔ	48. eblɔ amɛ	
49. mibahe	50. mibahe komi	
51. mihoo	52. mihoo yɔɔ lɛ	



PL
8191
.2
B4

Berry, Jack
The pronunciation of Ga

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

